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Arthur Miller Tragedy and the Common Man

Tennessee Williams On Theme

Susan Glaspell From the Short Story Version of Trifles

C) Critical Approaches:

-Structuralism

-Reader Response

-Feminist Criticism

-Marxist Criticism

-Historical Criticism

-Deconstruction

-Psychoanalytic Criticism

-Postmodernism

-Postcolonialism

Beth Henley Am I Blue

Fornes, Maria Irene. The Conduct of Life

Jane Martin Rodeo

Arthur Miller Death of a Salesman

Anna D. Smith From Twilight: Los Anglos,1992

c)-Two Sample Student Essays

Fourth Sections:

a) Autobiography:

An overview: definition and brief history

Benjamin Franklin The Autobiography

Part I: Names of Virtues

Harriet Jacobs Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

Ch. I: Childhood & Ch. XLI: Free at Last

Frederick Douglass's Narrative, Chs. I, VII.

Gertrude Stein Selections from Everybody's Autobiography

b) Critical Essays:

Mody C. Boatright A Typical Western Plot Formula

William Faulkne On the Demands of Writing Short Stories

Ursula K. Le Guin On Conflict in Fiction

A. L. Bader Nothing Happens in Modern Short Stories

Sylvia Plarh On Headline Poetry

William Wordsworth On the Nature of Poets and Poetry

Ezra Pound On Free Verse

Alice Fulton On the Validity of Free Verse

Ralph W. Emerson The Poet

Diane Ackerman On Ehat Poetry Is Not—and Is

Phyllis Webb (Can.) Poetics against the Angel of Death

Williams Carlos Williams The Dance

May Sarton (Belgium) The Phoenix Again

Muriel Rukeyser Myth

Imamu A. Baraka Ka'Ba

Earle Birney (Canadian) Can.Lit.

Li-Young Lee (Chinese) A Final Thing

Amy Lowell Patterns

Claude McKay (Harlem) The White City

Simon Ortiz (Native Am.) A Story of How a Wall Stands

Sonia Sanchez right on: white america

Maya Angelou Africa

Linda Hogan Song for My Name

Mary Oliver The Black Snake

Octavio Paz (Mexican) The Street

Peter Meinke The ABC of Aerobics

Harjo, Joy. **The Woman Who Fell from the Sky (selections)**

c)-Two Sample Student Essays

Plays:

a)-A General Overview: tragedy, comedy, structure of plays, and other dramatic concepts

b)-Languston Hughes Mulatto

Petty Keller Tea Party

Eugene O'Neill Before Breakfast

Susan Glaspell Trifles

Valdez, Luis. Los Vendidos

Jones, LeRoi. Dutchman

Flannery O'Connor   A Good Man Is Hard to Find

Sarah Orne Jewett   A White Heron

Vizenor, Gerald. Dead Voices: Natural Agonies in the New World.

Cisneros, Sandra. The House on Mango Street.

c)-Two sample student essays

Poems:

a)-An overview: symbolism, imagery, myth, figures of speech, and other relevant topics.

b)-e. e. cummings   next to of course god america i

Linda Pastan   Ethics

Wallace Stevens   Disillusionment of Ten O'clock

Elizabeth Bishop   The Fish

Lee, Li-Young. **Rose** (selections)

Sylvia Plath   Daddy

Walt Whitman   Facing West From California's Shores

Anne Bradstreet   To My Dear and Loving Husband

Langston Hughes   Theme for English B

Chin, Marilyn. **The Dwarf Bamboo** (selections)

Judith Viorst   True Love

Gwendolyn Brooks   We Real Cool

Mora, Pat. **Borders** (selections)

Nikki Giovanni   Nikki-Rosa

Emily Dickinson   I'm Nobody! Who Are You?

May Swenson (of Swedish ancestry)   Women

Jean Toomer   Reapers

Sample Works to Be Taught:

Fiction:

a)-An overview: structure, character, theme, setting, tone, style, etc.

b)-Eudora Welty A Worn Path

Tim O'Brien The Things They Carried

Alice Walker Everyday Use

Tom Whitecloud (Native American) Blue Winds Dancing

Joy Williams Taking Care

Willa Cather Paul's Case

Stephen Crane The Blue Hotel

William Faulkner Burn Burning

Amy Tan (Chinese American) Two Kinds

Shirley Jackson The Lottery

John Updike A&P

Hurston, Zora. Sweat

Kate Chopin The Story of an hour

Margaret Atwood (Canadian) Rape Fantasies

Alice Munro (Canadian) The Found Boat

Yamamoto, Hisaye. Seventeen Syllables

Nathaniel Hawthorne Young Goodman Brown

Edgar Allan Poe The Fall of the House of Usher

Ernest Hemingway Soldier's Home

Michel Tremblay (French-Canadian) The Thimble

Robert Olen Butler Snow

Sharma, Akhil. If you Sing Like That for Me

Charlotte P. Gilman The Yellow Wallpaper

A helpful introduction to literature is to handle all genres. The works to be introduced may have four sections: 1-Fiction (short stories); 2-**Poetry**; 3-**Drama** (mainly short plays); 4-**General Section** (autobiographies, critical essays, and theoretical approaches). Focusing on short works in both fiction and drama sections is due to the fact that it is an introductory literature course. If students understand short works, and are able to apply theories to these works, they will be able to analyze and discuss long works on their own.

Critical Approaches:

To help students look at and discuss the texts of an introductory literature course from different, theoretical, and critical perspectives, an introduction to literary theory with examples should be provided. Having sample essays will help students understand how a critical essay looks like with regards to structure, organization, focus, etc. These essays will allow students plan and develop their writing assignments. Indeed, the more effectively students learn to write about literature while taking their literature courses, the better they will be able to write in the future whatever the topic is.

Today, it is hard to separate literature from theories. As Graff observes, "any teacher of literature is unavoidably a literary theorist. Whatever a teacher says about a literary work, or leaves unsaid, presupposes a theory" (250). Giving students a chance to ask and try to answer their questions will instigate their curiosity to explore the text, and think creatively and critically. Though the text is chosen and assigned, yet the ideas and discussion in the class should focus on the students' raised issues.

IN BRIEF: Introductory literature course should be designed to offer alternatives to the traditional methods of teaching college literature. These alternatives are based on the author's gender, multi-cultures, contemporary theories, and thematic categories that relate to students' needs. Using different techniques and methods such as question/discussion, presentation, group discussion, and a cooperative learning assignment will help them to create an educational environment. Group activities and discussions are to be encouraged, because students may learn from each other.

Related Works:

I believe that translated works into English are important. Such works will allow students to learn and understand other cultures in general, and their immigrant ancestors' heritage in particular. In addition, in an introductory course, students may read for those literary non-American authors who wrote about America. Such an assignment will give students a chance to see how others look at their culture and values.

Cultural Differences & Conflicts:

Different minority writers may introduce cultural differences and disputes in their writings. And college students should be exposed to differences and conflicts found in those writings. Gerald Graff argues that "the dispute itself becomes part of what educated persons should know" (44). Indeed, in his book Beyond the Culture Wars (1992), Graff argues for teaching conflicts to students. Since many contemporary problems arise out of moral, religious, and ethical beliefs, the classroom may be the right place to address these problems and conflicts.

Inclusion:

The time has come to fully expand syllabi and give minority writers, particularly in the United States, their full place in the canon. Works by women, people of color, and various minorities are to be integrated with the established master works in the field "so that the common intellectual culture of America includes representation from all its constituent people" (Mark B. Ryan 173). We have to be fair, and let minority groups have their rights granted, freedom expressed, equality practiced and voice heard.

History should be taught whatever it might be. Gates argues that "You can't opt out of history. History may be a nightmare" (106).

In addition, teachers are to put the word "introductory" in front of them while preparing the syllabi and while teaching students. A syllabus is to include a variety of authors with a range of styles and voices. One work will be a sample from which students can build their own readings as they explore other works by the same author by themselves.

> on subjects who cross cultural boundaries of race, ethnicity, class, and gender. These texts cause us to rethink American literature. (113)

Yet we have to admit that there are historical and political dimensions behind any tradition. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. points out that "those of us working in my own tradition confront the hegemony of the Western tradition, generally, and of the larger American tradition" (107) that "appear to convey and sustain the dominant social order" (Arnold Krupat 310).

Anthologies:

The traditional canon leaves no place for minorities such as African American and feminist studies. Some try to redefine the canon by editing anthologies that include "the commonplace book of our shared culture" (Gates 92).

However, any anthology that is intended to introduce students to literature should focus on presenting a variety of literary works through providing different genres (fiction, poetry, and drama), and avoiding excessive emphasis on one author, genre, theme, or race. Recently, works by women, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans are included in the anthologies.

Today, different cultures, like those mentioned above, should be understood and recognized by college students. Recognizing those cultures will help students realize that there are other different cultures with different values in our world; cultures they may be exposed to one day.

However, each anthologized work is usually followed by study questions. These questions are designed to help students in their exploration of literary works. They serve for both in-class and out-class assignments.

Yet, teachers should give students a chance to pose questions. Asking questions hold them accountable and involved in the educational process. Also, teachers may need to prepare a packet beside the assigned anthology.

What is American literature? In introductory literature courses, what should teachers try to teach college students? Are there particular criteria for what is introduced? If students have no chance to explore their culture while taking introductory literature courses, are they going to do so on their own? What about minorities' literature? Should their races get represented? Do teachers need to pay attention to their students' needs? And what is the best method to engage college students in introductory courses? There are many, many questions that require answers. I will try to answer such questions in the following few pages.

Defining an American Canon & Constituting Selves as Subjects:

Literary canon, as a term, is used to refer to works and authors that are considered "major", usually by a particular group in a society. So traditional American canon reflects the interests and ideologies of the powerful dominant class. Hence, Joyce C. Harte maintains that

> Because of the hollowed status of those 'great books' from which our realities were erased and a pedagogy which demanded awe and reverence for the authority of these texts, we were constructed as passive students who imbibed literature unquestionably. (94)

Canon Formation & the Political Issues:

To limit the term "American Literature" to the works of white U.S. males is a big mistake. In the words of Paul Lauter, general editor of **The Heath Anthology of American Literature**, "From its start, the New World community was multi-racial and multi-cultural ... early offered signs of the necessary mingling of red, white, and black..." (81). In addition, American literature is not limited to what is written in the United States. Brenda M. Greene, on her part, argues:

> American literature is not bound by the borders of the United States; it includes the Caribbean, Central America, South America, and all of North America. These texts ... are non-linear and shift across history and geography.... They center women's lives, and focus

دراسه الادب الامريكى

قاسم بن حسين دُهل

الملخص

من الخطأ قصر "الأدب الأمريكي" على كُتّاب من فئة بعينها وخاصة ذوي السحنة البيضاء. فلقد حان الوقت ليشمل المنهج كُتّاب الأقليات الأخرى ممن لم يأخذوا مكانتهم من قبل في الموسوعات المتداولة. فالأعمال التي كتبها ملونون ونساء وكُتّاب من أعراق مختلفة تكوّن المجتمع الأمريكي ينبغي أن تأخذ الحيّز الذي يليق بها ضمن منهج يحتوي على أعمال تعودنا ذكرها وقراءتها في الموسوعات دون غيرها، وذلك لأن الأدب يعطي فرصة للطلاب للتعرف عن كثب على حياة الآخرين وأحاسيسهم وما يكتنف تواجدهم خارج قاعة الدرس، ويمكنهم من دراسة فترات تاريخية مختلفة عن طريق كتابات مثلت تلك الحقب.

إن موسوعة قُدّر لها أن تُقدّم الأدب الأمريكي للطلاب يجب أن تشتمل على أعمال أدبية متنوعة تُمثّل المجتمع بسائر فئاته دون أن تُغفِل ذلك على حساب كاتب أو جنس أدبي أو موضوع أو عرق، وخصوصاً في زمن يستدعي منا تفهّم ومعرفة ثقافات متنوعة ومختلفة بعد انتشار المعلومة عن طريق الشبكة العنكبوتية.

وفي هذه الورقة سأناقش ما يلزم تقديمه لطلاب الجامعة وكيفية تقديمه عند تدريس الأدب بشكل عام و"الأدب الأمريكي" بشكل خاص.

On Introducing American Literature to College Students

Gassim H. Dohal

Abstract

To limit the term "American Literature" to the works of white American males is a mistake. The time has come to fully expand syllabi and give "minorities" writers their full place in the canon. Works by women, people of color, and various minorities are to be integrated with the established master works in the field. Through literature, students are to learn about humanity, others' feelings and lives, and patterns of human existence outside the classroom. They are to learn about different periods of history represented by a variety of writers rather than by aspecific type of writers.

Any anthology that is intended to introduce students to literature should focus on presenting a variety of literary works through providing different genres (fiction, poetry, and drama), and avoiding excessive emphasis on one author, genre, theme, or race. Today, different cultures should be understood and recognized particularly after the emergence of the Internet technology where the world becomes one village. I will discuss how and what literature should be introduced to college students.